

**Great Horwood Parish Council
Planning Committee**

THE WINSLOW GREEN OUTLINE PLANNING APPLICATION (08/02944/AOP)

For the record

- The application related to “the former Little Horwood Airfield and adjacent land to the north of Winslow, Winslow Road, Great Horwood, Buckinghamshire MK17 0NY”. It was an Outline Planning Application for the “construction of mixed use development to provide a sustainable extension to Winslow comprising 3300 new dwellings (including affordable); open space and recreation facilities (including sports pitches, country park, nature reserve and play area); employment land (up to 68,000 sq metres of office space) retail floor space (up to 3500 sq metres) and supermarket (3000 sq metres); hotel; education facilities (1 secondary, 3 primary and 3 nursery schools); community facilities (including community centre, creche, GP centre, PACE facility, library and allotments) cemetery; railway station and bus interchange (including parking); relief road with landscaping; Sustainable Urban Drainage Scheme; drainage attenuation lakes; and Sewage Treatment Works”.
- The application was submitted by Greenway Land LLP of Congleton, Cheshire via Phillips Planning Services Ltd of Bedford, and was received and validated by AVDC on 29 December 2008.
- On receipt of a copy of the application and accompanying documents, which occupied an entire document box, the Planning Committee set about reading and analysing the material.
- The Committee was mindful of the resolution passed at the Public Meeting on 8 October 2005 opposing any large-scale development on the former airfield site (this was in response to an earlier scheme from Greenway which never reached the stage of an actual planning application) and of the similar statement in the 2006 Parish Plan.
- The Committee liaised closely with Little Horwood Parish Council, with Winslow Town Council, and with the North Bucks Parishes Planning Consortium (NBPPC).
- The Committee met with the Officers of AVDC to receive information on the policy background to the application. This indicated clearly that the application would violate a number of national and regional policies and the strategic basis of the emerging AVDC Local Development Framework.
- The Committee organised and publicised an exhibition of the application documents and plans in Great Horwood Village Hall on 24 and 31 January 2009, attracting a total of 191 attendees. By contrast, Greenway Land’s own event in Winslow brought in only about 150 people.
- The Committee organised and publicised a Public Meeting in Great Horwood Village Hall on 5 February 2009, chaired by John Gilbey. John Bercow MP and County Cllr David Rowlands attended and spoke. About 190 people packed into the hall on a very snowy evening. Rod Moulding presented the details of the application and the Committee’s reasons for opposing it. A lively discussion followed, concluding with a residents-only poll which resulted in a vote of 157 to 1 with 1 abstention in favour of a motion “We the residents of Great Horwood Parish are totally opposed to any development on the old airfield site and adjoining farmland and specifically to the

Winslow Green proposal. We ask the Parish Council to oppose this application on our behalf.” The resident who voted against the motion had an interest in the application.

- The Committee encouraged residents to write letters of objection to AVDC. By the date of the AVDC Strategic Development Committee meeting (see below) 240 letters of objection had been received from Great Horwood with 5 in favour. At least 2 of the 5 are believed to be from persons with an interest in the application.
- A further 759 letters of objection were received from elsewhere, together with a further 7 in support.
- The Committee prepared for the approval of the Council a detailed response to the application which listed 15 separate reasons for rejecting the application, foremost among these being the devastating effect that a new development of 3300 homes less than a mile away would have on the community of Great Horwood.
- The Officers of AVDC prepared a comprehensive report which concluded that the application should be rejected on 9 different grounds, all statutory consultees bar one having opposed the application. An addendum was subsequently circulated which listed a further 3 reasons following receipt of a late response from the Environment Agency.
- The application was considered at a meeting of AVDC’s Strategic Development Committee on 1 April 2009. Rod Moulding spoke on behalf of Great Horwood Parish Council, and other speakers included representatives of Little Horwood Parish Council (Frank Donlon), Winslow Town Council (Llew Monger), NBPPC (Tim Welch), Buckingham Town Council (Warren White), Group Against Greenway (Peter Arnold) and Winslow Protection Society (Shirley Millichip) together with Cllr Sir Beville Stanier, Cllr Lindsey Rowlands, Cllr Derek Isham, Cllr Timothy Mills and 2 members of the public also spoke, all of whom opposed the application. Roger Evans presented the case for the applicant. All but one of the members of the Strategic Development Committee spoke about the application, in each case against it. At the vote, the application was rejected unanimously.

We now await the decision of Greenway Land LLP on whether to appeal against AVDC’s decision. They have 6 months in which to do this. In advance of this the Committee may wish to consider what actions it would take if the applicant were to decide to appeal, time and money being likely to be the principal problems.

Rod Moulding

6 April 2009